

Solo Exhibition, Abbott Hall, Kendal, September 2015 and July 2015

*South by Southwest* was a practice based research project that continues my ongoing investigation into spaces created through desire and their inbuilt failures through the medium photography and video. It juxtaposes of narrative and image.

Taking the cue from tragic story of the last golden eagle living in England, I developed a video work and a series of large-scale photographs; the last golden eagle in England lives near Haweswater in the Lake District. He moved here about 10 years ago to live with his female partner. The two birds repeatedly tried to breed eaglets without success. The eggs from these failed attempts are held in the collections of Tullie House. Since having lost his mate ten years ago, continues to build nests of ever increasing size and performs the eagle's sky dance in failed attempts to attract a new mate.

The video work 'South by Southwest' superimposes eagle-defined co-ordinates over the majestic landscapes of the Lake District to propose a new kind of mapping where the landscape is defined through the movements of the bird. Read by Dave Walker, an ornithologist who has been following the eagles in the lake district over the past 30 years, the voice over has echoes of the shipping news; it abstracts both the bird and the landscape.

The aforementioned photographs of the un-hatched eagle eggs that are part of the collection at Tullie House. Magnified on a scale of 1 to 300 the eggs begin to resemble planets, each bearing distinct characteristics different from the others. The photographs that act as evidence of the eagle's failed attempts to reproduce bear testimony to unrealized potential, desire, hope and failure. They reference the language of large-scale photographic portraiture employed in the work of Thomas Ruff, except here the portraits are of still lives.

The work was supported through a New Expressions (Arts Council) Commission in collaboration the Cumbria Museum Consortium; Abbot Hall, Tullie House and the Wordsworth Trust. I was invited to develop a series of works that would establish links between the three venues as well as respond to the region of Cumbria.